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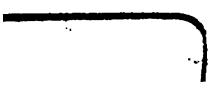

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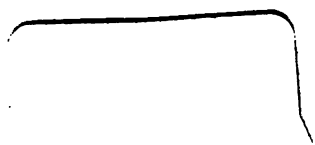

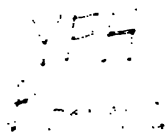

CHRISTIAN MORALS.

BY

SIR THOMAS BROWNE, M.D.,
OF NORWICH.
AUTHOR OF "RELIGIO MEDICI."

EDITED FROM THE ORIGINAL AND CORRECT MANUSCRIPT
OF THE AUTHOR;

By JOHN JEFFERY, D.D.,
ARCHDEACON OF NORWICH.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY HENRY WASHBOURNE,
18, NEW BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS.

MDCCCXLV.

16-

London :
Printed by STEWART and MURRAY,
Old Bailey.

PREFACE.

If any one, after he has read Religio Medici, and the ensuing Discourse, can make doubt whether the same person was the Author of them both, he may be assured by the testimony of Mrs. Littleton, Sir Thomas Browne's daughter, who lived with her father when it was composed by him, and who, at the time, read it written by his own hand; and also by the testimony of others (of whom I am one) who read the manuscript of the Author immediately after his death, and who have since read the same, from which it hath been faithfully and exactly transcribed for the press. The reason why it was not printed sooner is, because it was unhappily lost, by being mislaid among other manuscripts, for which search was lately made in the presence of the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, of

which his Grace by letter informed Mrs. Littleton, when he sent the manuscript to her. There is nothing printed in the Discourse, or in the short notes, but what is found in the original manuscript of the Author, except only where an oversight had made the addition or transposition of some words necessary.

JOHN JEFFERY,
ARCHDEACON OF NORWICH.

CHRISTIAN MORALS.

PART I.

§ 1.—Tread softly and circumspectly in this funambulatory[1] track and narrow path of goodness: pursue virtue virtuously: leaven not good actions, nor render virtues disputable. Stain not fair acts with foul intentions: maim not uprightness by halting concomitances, nor circumstantially deprave substantial goodness.

Consider whereabout thou art in Cebes's table,[2] or that old philosophical pinax[3] of the life of man: whether thou art yet in the road of uncertainties; whether thou hast yet entered the narrow gate, got up the hill and asperous way, which leadeth unto the house of sanity; or taken that purifying potion from the hand of sincere erudition, which may send thee clear and pure away unto a virtuous and happy life.

In this virtuous voyage of thy life hull not about like the ark, without the use of rudder, mast, or sail, and bound for no port. Let not disappointment cause despondency, nor difficulty despair. Think not that you

[1] Narrow, like the walk of a rope-dancer.

[2] The table or picture of Cebes, an allegorical representation of the characters and conditions of mankind; which is translated by Mr. Collier, and added to the meditations of Antoninus.

[3] Picture.

are sailing from Lima[4] to Manilla, when you may fasten up the rudder, and sleep before the wind; but expect rough seas, flaws,[5] and contrary blasts: and it is well if by many cross tacks and veerings you arrive at the port; for we sleep in lions' skins[6] in our progress unto virtue, and we slide not but climb unto it.

Sit not down in the popular forms and common level of virtues. Offer not only peace-offerings, but holocausts unto God; where all is due make no reserve, and cut not a cummin-seed with the Almighty: to serve him singly to serve ourselves were too partial a piece of piety, not like to place us in the illustrious mansions of glory.

§ 2. — Rest not in an ovation[7] but a triumph over thy passions. Let anger walk hanging down the head; let malice go manacled, and envy fettered, after thee. Behold within thee the long train of thy trophies, not without thee. Make the quarrelling Lapithytes sleep, and Centaurs within lie quiet.[8] Chain up the unruly legion of thy breast. Lead thine own captivity captive, and be Cæsar within thyself.

§ 3.—He that is chaste and continent not to impair his strength, or honest for fear of contagion, will hardly be heroically virtuous. Adjourn not this virtue until that temper, when Cato[9] could lend out his wife, and impotent satyrs write satires upon lust.

§ 4.—Show thy art in honesty, and lose not thy virtue by the bad managery of it. Be temperate and

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[4] Over the Pacific Ocean, in the course of the ship which now sails from Acapulco to Manilla, perhaps formerly from Lima, or more properly from Callao, Lima not being a seaport.

[5] Sudden gusts, or violent attacks of bad weather.

[6] That is, "in armour, in a state of military vigilance." One of the Grecian chiefs used to represent open force by the "lion's skin," and policy by the "fox's tail."

[7] Ovation, a petty and minor kind of triumph.

[8] That is, "thy turbulent and irascible passions." For the Lapithytes and Centaurs, see Ovid.

[9] The Censor, who is frequently confounded, and by Pope amongst others, with Cato of Utica.

sober: not to preserve your body in an ability for wanton ends; not to avoid the infamy of common transgressors that way, and thereby to hope to expiate or palliate obscure and closer vices; not to spare your purse, nor simply to enjoy health; but in one word, that thereby you may truly serve God, which every sickness will tell you you cannot well do without health. The sick man's sacrifice is but a lame oblation. Pious treasures laid up in healthful days, plead for sick non-performances, without which we must needs look back with anxiety upon the lost opportunities of health, and may have cause rather to envy than pity the ends of penitent public sufferers, who go with healthful prayers unto the last scene of their lives, and in the integrity of their faculties[10] return their spirit unto God that gave it.

§ 5.—Be charitable before wealth make thee covetous, and lose not the glory of the mite. If riches increase, let thy mind hold pace with them; and think it not enough to be liberal, but munificent. Though a cup of cold water from some hand may not be without its reward, yet stick not thou for wine and oil for the wounds of the distressed; and treat the poor as our Saviour did the multitude, to the relics of some baskets. Diffuse thy beneficence early, and while thy treasures call thee master: there may be an Atropos[11] of thy fortunes before that of thy life, and thy wealth cut off before that hour when all men shall be poor; for the justice of death looks equally upon the dead, and Charon expects no more from Alexander than from Irus.

§ 6.—Give not only unto seven, but also unto eight,[12] that is, unto more than many. Though to give unto every one that asketh[13] may seem severe advice, yet give thou also before asking; that is, where want is silently clamorous, and men's necessities, not their tongues, do loudly call for thy mercies. For

[10] "With their faculties unimpaired."
[11] Atropos is the lady of destiny that cuts the thread of life.
[12] Ecclesiasticus. [13] Luke.

though sometimes necessitousness be dumb, or misery speak not out; yet true charity is sagacious, and will find out hints for beneficence. Acquaint thyself with the physiognomy of want, and let the dead colours and first lines of necessity suffice to tell thee there is an object for thy bounty. Spare not where thou canst not easily be prodigal, and fear not to be undone by mercy; for since he who hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Almighty rewarder, who observes no ides[14] but every day for his payments, charity becomes pious usury, Christian liberality the most thriving industry, and what we adventure in a cockboat may return in a carrack unto us. He who thus casts his bread upon the water shall surely find it again; for though it falleth to the bottom, it sinks but, like the axe of the prophet, to rise again unto him.

§ 7.—If avarice be thy vice, yet make it not thy punishment. Miserable men commiserate not themselves; bowelless unto others, and merciless unto their own bowels. Let the fruition of things bless the possession of them, and think it more satisfaction to live richly than die rich. For since thy good works, not thy goods will follow thee; since wealth is an appurtenance of life, and no dead man is rich; to famish in plenty, and live poorly to die rich, were a multiplying improvement in madness, and use upon use in folly.

§ 8.—Trust not to the omnipotency of gold, and say not unto it thou art my confidence. Kiss not thy hand to that terrestrial sun, nor bow thy ear unto its servitude. A slave unto mammon makes no servant unto God. Covetousness cracks the sinews of faith, numbs the apprehension of any thing above sense; and only affected with the certainty of things present, makes a peradventure of things to come; lives but unto one

[14] The ides was the time when money lent out at interest was commonly repaid.

———Fœnerator Alphius
Suam relegit Idibus pecuniam
Quærit calendis ponere. Hor.

world, nor hopes but fears another; makes their own death sweet unto others, bitter unto themselves; brings formal sadness, scenical mourning, and no wet eyes at the grave.

§ 9.—Persons lightly dipped, not grained[15] in generous honesty, are but pale in goodness, and faint-hued in integrity. But be thou what thou virtuously art, and let not the ocean wash away thy tincture. Stand magnetically upon that axis,[16] when prudent simplicity hath fixed there; and let no attraction invert the poles of thy honesty. That vice may be uneasy and even monstrous unto thee, let repeated good acts and long confirmed habits make virtue almost natural, or a second nature in thee. Since virtuous superstructions have commonly generous foundations, dive into thy inclinations, and early discover what nature bids thee to be, or tells thee thou mayest be. They who thus timely descend into themselves, and cultivate the good seeds which nature hath set in them, prove not shrubs but cedars in their generation. And to be in the form of the best of the bad, or the worst of the good,[17] will be no satisfaction unto them.

§ 10.—Make not the consequence of virtue the ends thereof. Be not beneficent for a name or cymbal of applause; nor exact and just in commerce for the advantages of trust and credit, which attend the reputation of true and punctual dealing: for these rewards, though unsought for, plain virtue will bring with her. To have other by-ends in good actions lowers laudable performances, which must have deeper roots, motives, and instigations, to give them the stamp of virtues.

§ 11.—Let not the law of thy country be the non ultra of thy honesty; nor think that always good enough which the law will make good. Narrow not the law of charity, equity, mercy. Join gospel righteous-

[15] Not deeply tinged, not dyed in grain.

[16] That is, "with a position as immutable as that of the magnetical axis."

[17] Optimi malorum pessimi bonorum. *First Edit.*

ness with legal right. Be not a mere Gamaliel in the faith, but let the sermon on the mount be thy Targum[18] unto the law of Sinai.

§ 12.—Live by old ethics and the classical rules of honesty. Put no new names or notions upon authentic virtues and vices. Think not that morality is ambulatory; that vices in one age are not vices in another; or that virtues, which are under the everlasting seal of right reason, may be stamped by opinion. And therefore, though vicious times invert the opinions of things, and set up new ethics against virtue, yet hold thou unto old morality; and rather than follow a multitude to do evil, stand like Pompey's pillar conspicuous by thyself, and single in integrity. And since the worst of times afford imitable examples of virtue; since no deluge of vice is like to be so general but more than eight[19] will escape; eye well those heroes who have held their heads above water, who have touched pitch and not been defiled, and in the common contagion have remained uncorrupted.

§ 13.—Let age, not envy, draw wrinkles on thy cheeks; be content to be envied, but envy not. Emulation may be plausible and indignation allowable, but admit no treaty with that passion which no circumstance can make good. A displacency at the good of others because they enjoy it, though not unworthy of it, is an absurd depravity, sticking fast unto corrupted nature, and often too hard for humility and charity, the great suppressors of envy. This surely is a lion not to be strangled but by Hercules himself, or the highest stress of our minds, and an atom of that power which subdueth all things unto itself.

§ 14. — Owe not thy humility unto humiliation from adversity, but look humbly down in that state when others look upwards upon thee. Think not thy own shadow longer than that of others, nor delight to take the altitude of thyself. Be patient in the age of

[18] A paraphrase or amplification.
[19] Alluding to the flood of Noah.

pride, when men live by short intervals of reason under the dominion of humour and passion, when it is in the power of every one to transform thee out of thyself, and run thee into the short madness. If you cannot imitate Job, yet come not short of Socrates,[20] and those patient Pagans who tired the tongues of their enemies, while they perceived they spit their malice at brazen walls and statues.

§ 15.—Let not the sun in Capricorn[21] go down upon thy wrath, but write thy wrongs in ashes. Draw the curtain of night upon injuries, shut them up in the tower of oblivion,[22] and let them be as though they had not been. To forgive our enemies, yet hope that God will punish them, is not to forgive enough. To forgive them ourselves, and not to pray God to forgive them, is a partial piece of charity. Forgive thine enemies totally, and without any reserve that, however, God will revenge thee.

§ 16.—While thou so hotly disclaimest the devil, be not guilty of diabolism. Fall not into one name with that unclean spirit, nor act his nature whom thou so much abhorrest; that is, to accuse, calumniate, backbite, whisper, detract, or sinistrously interpret others. Degenerous depravities, and narrow-minded vices! not only below St. Paul's noble Christian but Aristotle's[23] true gentleman. Trust not with some that the Epistle of St. James is apocryphal, and so read

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[20] ——Dulcique senex vicinus Hymetto,
Qui partem acceptæ sæva inter vincla cicutæ,
Accusatori nollet dare. Juv.

Not so mild Thales, nor Chrysippus thought;
Nor the good man who drank the pois'nous draught
With mind serene, and could not wish to see
His vile accuser drink as deep as he:
Exalted Socrates!—— Creech.

[21] Even when the days are shortest.

[22] Alluding unto the Tower of Oblivion mentioned by Procopius, which was the name of a tower of imprisonment among the Persians: whoever was put therein was, as it were, buried alive, and it was death for any but to name him.

[23] See Aristotle's Ethics, chapter of Magnanimity.

with less fear that stabbing truth, that in company with this vice "thy religion is in vain." Moses broke the tables, without breaking of the law; but where charity is broke, the law itself is shattered, which cannot be whole without Love, which is "the fulfilling of it." Look humbly upon thy virtues; and though thou art rich in some, yet think thyself poor and naked without that crowning grace, which "thinketh no evil, which envieth not, which beareth, hopeth, believeth, endureth all things." With these sure graces, while busy tongues are crying out for a drop of cold water, mutes may be in happiness, and sing the Trisagion[24] in heaven.

§ 17. — However thy understanding may waver in the theories of true and false, yet fasten the rudder of thy will, steer straight unto good and fall not foul on evil. Imagination is apt to rove, and conjecture to keep no bounds. Some have run out so far, as to fancy the stars might be but the light of the crystalline heaven shot through perforations on the bodies of the orbs. Others more ingeniously doubt whether there hath not been a vast tract of land in the Atlantic ocean, which earthquakes and violent causes have long ago devoured. Speculative misapprehensions may be innocuous, but immorality pernicious; theoretical mistakes and physical deviations may condemn our judgments, not lead us into judgment. But perversity of will, immoral and sinful enormities, walk with Adraste and Nemesis[25] at their backs, pursue us unto judgment, and leave us viciously miserable.

§ 18.—Bid early defiance unto those vices which are of thine inward family, and having a root in thy temper plead a right and propriety in thee. Raise timely batteries against those strong holds built upon the rock of nature, and make this a great part of the militia of thy life. Delude not thyself into iniquities from participation or community, which abate the sense but not the obliquity of them. To conceive sins less, or less of sins, because others also transgress, were morally

[24] Holy, holy, holy. [25] The powers of vengeance.

to commit that natural fallacy of man, to take comfort from society, and think adversities less because others also suffer them. The politic nature of vice must be opposed by policy; and, therefore, wiser honesties project and plot against it: wherein, notwithstanding, we are not to rest in generals, or the trite stratagems of art. That may succeed with one, which may prove successless with another: there is no community or common weal of virtue: every man must study his own economy, and adapt such rules unto the figure of himself.

§ 19.—Be substantially great in thyself, and more than thou appearest unto others; and let the world be deceived in thee, as they are in the lights of heaven. Hang plummets early upon the heels of pride, and let ambition have but an epicycle[26] and narrow circuit in thee. Measure not thyself by thy morning shadow, but by the extent of thy grave; and reckon thyself above the earth, by the line thou must be contented with under it. Spread not into boundless expansions either of designs or desires. Think not that mankind liveth but for a few; and that the rest are born but to serve those ambitions which make but flies of men and wildernesses of whole nations. Swell not into vehement actions which embroil and confound the earth; but be one of those violent ones which force the kingdom of heaven.[27] If thou must needs rule, be Zeno's king,[28] and enjoy that empire which every man gives himself. He who is thus his own monarch contentedly sways the sceptre of himself, not envying the glory of crowned heads and elohims of the earth. Could the world unite in the practice of that despised train of virtues, which the divine ethics of our Saviour hath so inculcated upon

[26] An epicycle is a small revolution made by one planet in the wider orbit of another planet. The meaning is, "Let not ambition form thy circle of action, but move upon other principles; and let ambition only operate as something extrinsic and adventitious."

[27] Matthew xi.

[28] That is, "the king of the Stoics," whose founder was Zeno, and who held that the wise man alone had power and royalty.

us, the furious face of things must disappear; Eden would be yet to be found, and the angels might look down, not with pity, but joy upon us.

§ 20.—Though the quickness of thine ear were able to reach the noise of the moon, which some think it maketh in its rapid revolution; though the number of thy ears should equal Argus's eyes: yet stop them all with the wise man's wax,[29] and be deaf unto the suggestions of tale-bearers, calumniators, pickthank or malevolent delators, who, while quiet men sleep, sowing the tares of discord and division, distract the tranquillity of charity and all friendly society. These are the tongues that set the world on fire, cankers of reputation, and, like that of Jonas's gourd, wither a good name in a night. Evil spirits may sit still, while these spirits walk about and perform the business of hell. To speak more strictly, our corrupted hearts are the factories of the devil, which may be at work without his presence; for when that circumventing spirit hath drawn malice, envy, and all unrighteousness unto well rooted habits in his disciples, iniquity then goes on upon its own legs; and if the gate of hell were shut up for a time, vice would still be fertile and produce the fruits of hell. Thus, when God forsakes us, Satan also leaves us: for such offenders he looks upon as sure and sealed up, and his temptations then needless unto them.

§ 21.—Annihilate not the mercies of God by the oblivion of ingratitude: for oblivion is a kind of annihilation; and for things to be as though they had not been, is like unto never being. Make not thy head a grave, but a repository of God's mercies. Though thou hadst the memory of Seneca, or Simonides, and conscience, the punctual memorist within us; yet trust not to thy remembrance in things which need phylacteries.[30]

[29] Alluding to the story of Ulysses, who stopped the ears of his companions with wax when they passed by the Sirens.

[30] A phylactery is a writing bound upon the forehead, containing something to be kept constantly in mind. This was practised by the Jewish doctors with regard to the Mosaic law.

Register not only strange, but merciful occurrences. Let Ephemerides not Olympiads[31] give thee account of his mercies; let thy diaries stand thick with dutiful mementos and asterisks of acknowledgment. And to be complete and forget nothing, date not his mercy from thy nativity; look beyond the world, and before the era of Adam.

§ 22.—Paint not the sepulchre of thyself, and strive not to beautify thy corruption. Be not an advocate for thy vices, nor call for many hour-glasses[32] to justify thy imperfections. Think not that always good which thou thinkest thou canst always make good, nor that concealed which the sun doth not behold; that which the sun doth not now see will be visible when the sun is out, and the stars are fallen from heaven. Meanwhile there is no darkness unto conscience, which can see without light, and in the deepest obscurity give a clear draught of things, which the cloud of dissimulation hath concealed from all eyes. There is a natural standing court within us, examining, acquitting, and condemning at the tribunal of ourselves; wherein iniquities have their natural thetas[33] and no nocent[34] is absolved by the verdict of himself. And therefore, although our transgressions shall be tried at the last bar, the process need not be long: for the Judge of all knoweth all, and every man will nakedly know himself; and when so few are like to plead not guilty, the assize must soon have an end.

§ 23. — Comply with some humours, bear with others, but serve none. Civil complacency consists with

[31] Particular journals of every day, not abstracts comprehending several years under one notation. An Ephemeris is a diary, an Olympiad is the space of four years.

[32] That is, "do not speak much or long in justification of thy faults." The ancient pleaders talked by a Clepsydra, or measurer of time.

[33] Θ, a theta inscribed upon the judges' tessera or ballot, was a mark for death or capital condemnation.

[34] ——————— Se
Judice nemo nocens absolvitur. Juv.

decent honesty. Flattery is a juggler, and no kin unto sincerity. But while thou maintainest the plain path and scornest to flatter others, fall not into self-adulation and become not thine own parasite. Be deaf unto thyself, and be not betrayed at home. Self-credulity, pride, and levity, lead unto self-idolatry. There is no Damocles[35] like unto self-opinion, nor any siren to our own fawning conceptions. To magnify our minor things, or hug ourselves in our apparitions;[36] to afford a credulous ear unto the clawing[37] suggestions of fancy; to pass our days in painted mistakes of ourselves, and though we behold our own blood[38] to think ourselves the sons of Jupiter:[39] are blandishments of self-love, worse than outward delusion. By this imposture, wise men sometimes are mistaken in their elevation, and look above themselves. And fools, which are antipodes[40] unto the wise, conceive themselves to be but their periœci,[41] and in the same parallel with them.

§ 24.—Be not a Hercules Furens abroad, and a poltroon within thyself. To chase our enemies out of the field, and be led captive by our vices; to beat down our foes, and fall down to our concupiscences; are solecisms in moral schools, and no laurel attends them. To well manage our affections, and wild horses of Plato, are the highest Circenses:[42] and the noblest digladiation[43] is in the theatre of ourselves; for therein our inward antagonists, not only like common gladiators, with ordinary weapons and downright blows

[35] Damocles was the flatterer of Dionysius.

[36] Appearances without realities.

[37] Tickling, flattering. A clawback is an old word for a flatterer. Jewel calls some writers for popery "the pope's clawbacks."

[38] That is, "though we bleed when we are wounded, though we find in ourselves the imperfections of humanity."

[39] As Alexander the Great did.

[40] Opposites.

[41] Only placed at a distance in the same line.

[42] Circenses were Roman horse-races.

[43] Fencing match.

make at us, but also like retiary and laqueary[44] combatants, with nets, frauds, and entanglements, fall upon us. Weapons for such combats are not to be forged at Lipara;[45] Vulcan's art doth nothing in this internal militia, wherein, not the armour of Achilles, but the armature of St. Paul, gives the glorious day, and triumphs, not leading up into capitols, but up into the highest heavens. And, therefore, while so many think it the only valour to command and master others, study thou the dominion of thyself, and quiet thine own commotions. Let right reason be thy Lycurgus,[46] and lift up thy hand unto the law of it: move by the intelligences of the superior faculties, not by the rapt of passion, nor merely by that of temper and constitution. They who are merely carried on by the wheel of such inclinations, without the hand and guidance of sovereign reason, are but the automatous[47] part of mankind, rather lived than living, or at least underliving themselves.

§ 25.—Let not fortune, which hath no name in Scripture, have any in thy divinity. Let Providence, not chance, have the honour of thy acknowledgments, and be thy Œdipus in contingencies. Mark well the paths and winding ways thereof; but be not too wise in the construction, or sudden in the application. The hand of Providence writes often by abbreviatures, hieroglyphics, or short characters, which, like the Laconism[48] on the wall, are not to be made out but by a hint or key from that Spirit which indited them. Leave future occurrences to their uncertainties, think that which is present thine own: and since it is easier to foretel an

[44] The Retiarius, or Laquearius was a prize-fighter, who entangled his opponent in a net, which by some dexterous management he threw upon him.

[45] The Liparæan islands, near Italy, being volcanos, were fabled to contain the forges of the Cyclops.

[46] Thy lawgiver.

[47] Moved not by choice, but by some mechanical impulse.

[48] The short sentence written on the wall of Belshazzar. See Daniel.

eclipse than a foul day at some distance, look for little regular below. Attend with patience the uncertainty of things, and what lieth yet unexerted in the chaos of futurity. The uncertainty and ignorance of things to come, makes the world new unto us by unexpected emergencies; whereby we pass not our days in the trite road of affairs affording no novelty; for the novelizing spirit of man lives by variety, and the new faces of things.

§ 26.—Though a contented mind enlargeth the dimension of little things; and unto some, it is wealth enough not to be poor; and others are well content if they be but rich enough to be honest, and to give every man his due: yet fall not into that obsolete affectation of bravery, to throw away thy money, and to reject all honours or honourable stations in this courtly and splendid world. Old generosity is superannuated, and such contempt of the world out of date. No man is now like to refuse the favour of great ones, or be content to say unto princes, Stand out of my sun.[49] And if there be any of such antiquated resolutions, they are not like to be tempted out of them by great ones: and it is fair if they escape the name of hypochondriacs from the genius of latter times, unto whom contempt of the world is the most contemptible opinion; and to be able, like Bias, to carry all they have about them, were to be the eighth wise man. However, the old Tetric[50] philosophers looked always with indignation upon such a face of things; and, observing the unnatural current of riches, power, and honour in the world, and withal the imperfection and demerit of persons often advanced unto them, were tempted unto angry opinions, that affairs were ordered more by stars than reason, and that things went on rather by lottery than election.

§ 27.—If thy vessel be but small in the ocean of this world, if meanness of possessions be thy allot-

[49] This was the answer made by Diogenes to Alexander, who asked him what he had to request.

[50] Sour, morose.

ment upon earth, forget not those virtues which the great Disposer of all bids thee to entertain from thy quality and condition; that is, submission, humility, content of mind, and industry. Content may dwell in all stations. To be low, but above contempt, may be high enough to be happy. But many of low degree may be higher than computed, and some cubits above the common commensuration; for in all states virtue gives qualifications and allowances, which make out defects. Rough diamonds are sometimes mistaken for pebbles; and meanness may be rich in accomplishments, which riches in vain desire. If our merits be above our stations, if our intrinsical value be greater than what we go for, or our value than our valuation, and if we stand higher in God's than in the censor's book,[51] it may make some equitable balance in the inequalities of this world, and there may be no such vast chasm or gulph between disparities as common measures determine. The Divine eye looks upon high and low differently from that of man. They who seem to stand upon Olympus,[52] and high mounted unto our eyes, may be but in the valleys and low ground unto his; for he looks upon those as highest who nearest approach his divinity, and upon those as lowest who are farthest from it.

§ 28.—When thou lookest upon the imperfections of others, allow one eye for what is laudable in them, and the balance they have from some excellency, which may render them considerable. While we look with fear or hatred upon the teeth of the viper, we may behold his eye with love. In venomous natures something may be amiable: poisons afford anti-poisons: nothing is totally, or altogether uselessly, bad. Notable virtues are sometimes dashed with notorious vices, and in some vicious tempers have been found illustrious acts of virtue; which makes such observable worth in some actions of king Demetrius, Antonius, and Ahab, as are

[51] The book in which the census, or account of every man's estate, was registered among the Romans.

[52] A high mountain.

not be to be found in the same kind in Aristides, Numa, or David. Constancy, generosity, clemency, and liberality have been highly conspicuous in some persons not marked out in other concerns for example or imitation. But since goodness is exemplary in all, if others have not our virtues, let us not be wanting in theirs; nor scorning them for their vices whereof we are free, be condemned by their virtues wherein we are deficient. There is dross, alloy, and embasement in all human tempers; and he flieth without wings, who thinks to find ophir or pure metal in any. For perfection is not, like light, centered in any one body; but, like the dispersed seminalities of vegetables at the creation, scattered through the whole mass of the earth, no place producing all, and almost all some. So that it is well, if a perfect man can be made out of many men, and, to the perfect eye of God, even out of mankind. Time, which perfects some things, imperfects also others. Could we intimately apprehend the ideated man, and as he stood in the intellect of God upon the first exertion by creation, we might more narrowly comprehend our present degeneration, and how widely we are fallen from the pure exemplar and idea of our nature: for after this corruptive elongation from a primitive and pure creation, we are almost lost in degeneration; and Adam hath not only fallen from his Creator, but we ourselves from Adam, our Tycho[53] and primary generator.

§ 29. — Quarrel not rashly with adversities not yet understood, and overlook not the mercies often bound up in them; for we consider not sufficiently the good of evils, nor fairly compute the mercies of Providence in things afflictive at first hand. The famous Andreas Doria being invited to a feast by Aloysio Fieschi with design to kill him, just the night before fell mercifully into a fit of the gout, and so escaped that mischief. When Cato intended to kill himself, from a

[53] Ὁ τύχων, qui facit, ὁ τυχὼν, qui adeptus est: he that makes, or he that possesses; as Adam might be said to contain within him the race of mankind.

blow which he gave his servant, who would not reach his sword unto him, his hand so swelled that he had much ado to effect his design. Hereby any one but a resolved Stoic might have taken a fair hint of consideration, and that some merciful genius would have contrived his preservation. To be sagacious in such intercurrences is not superstition, but wary and pious discretion; and to contemn such hints were to be deaf unto the speaking hand of God, wherein Socrates [54] and Cardan would hardly have been mistaken.

§ 30.—Break not open the gate of destruction, and make no haste or bustle unto ruin. Post not heedlessly on unto the non ultra of folly, or precipice of perdition. Let vicious ways have their tropics[55] and deflexions, and swim in the waters of sin but as in the Asphaltic lake,[56] though smeared and defiled, not to sink to the bottom. If thou hast dipped thy foot in the brink, yet venture not over Rubicon.[57] Run not into extremities from whence there is no regression. In the vicious ways of the world it mercifully falleth out that we become not extempore wicked, but it taketh some time and pains to undo ourselves. We fall not from virtue, like Vulcan from heaven, in a day. Bad dispositions require some time to grow into bad habits; bad habits must undermine good, and often repeated acts make us habitually evil; so that by gradual depravations, and while we are but staggeringly evil, we are not left without parentheses of considerations, thoughtful rebukes, and merciful interventions to recal us unto ourselves. For the wisdom of God hath methodized the course of things unto the best advantage of good-

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[54] Socrates, and Cardan, perhaps, in imitation of him, talked of an attendant spirit or genius, that hinted from time to time how they should act.

[55] The tropic is the point where the sun turns back.

[56] The lake of Sodom; the waters of which being very salt, and, therefore, heavy, will scarcely suffer an animal to sink.

[57] The river, by crossing which, Cæsar declared war against the Senate.

ness, and thinking considerators overlook not the tract thereof.

§ 31.—Since men and women have their proper virtues and vices, and even twins of different sexes have not only distinct coverings in the womb, but differing qualities and virtuous habits after, transplace not their properties, and confound not their distinctions. Let masculine and feminine accomplishments shine in their proper orbs, and adorn their respective subjects. However, unite not the vices of both sexes in one; be not monstrous in iniquity, nor hermaphroditically vicious.

§ 32. — If generous honesty, valour, and plain dealing, be the cognizance of thy family, or characteristic of thy country, hold fast such inclinations drawn in with thy first breath, and which lay in the cradle with thee. Fall not into transforming degenerations, which under the old name, create a new nation. Be not an alien in thine own nation; bring not Orontes into Tiber;[58] learn the virtues, not the vices of thy foreign neighbours, and make thy imitation by discretion, not contagion. Feel something of thyself in the noble acts of thy ancestors, and find in thine own genius that of thy predecessors. Rest not under the expired merits of others, shine by those of thine own. Flame not like the central fire which enlighteneth no eyes, which no man seeth, and most men think there is no such thing to be seen. Add one ray unto the common lustre; add not only to the number, but the note of thy generation; and prove not a cloud, but an asterisk[59] in thy region.

§ 33.—Since thou hast an alarum[60] in thy breast, which tells thee thou hast a living spirit in thee above two thousand times in an hour, dull not away thy days

[58] In Tiberim defluxit Orontes: "Orontes has mingled her stream with the Tiber," says Juvenal, speaking of the confluence of foreigners to Rome.

[59] A small star.

[60] The motion of the heart, which beats about sixty times in a minute; or, perhaps, the motion of respiration, which is nearer to the number mentioned.

in slothful supinity and the tediousness of doing nothing. To strenuous minds there is an inquietude in over-quietness, and no laboriousness in labour; and to tread a mile after the slow pace of a snail, or the heavy measures of the lazy[61] of Brazilia, were a most tiring penance, and worse than a race of some furlongs at the Olympics.[62] The rapid courses of the heavenly bodies are rather imitable by our thoughts, than our corporeal motions: yet the solemn motions of our lives amount unto a greater measure than is commonly apprehended. Some few men have surrounded the globe of the earth; yet many in the set locomotions and movements of their days have measured the circuit of it, and twenty thousand miles have been exceeded by them. Move circumspectly, not meticulously,[63] and rather carefully solicitous than anxiously solicitudinous. Think not there is a lion in the way, nor walk with leaden sandals in the paths of goodness; but in all virtuous motions let prudence determine thy measures. Strive not to run, like Hercules, a furlong in a breath: festination may prove precipitation; deliberating delay may be wise cunctation, and slowness no slothfulness.

§ 34.—Since virtuous actions have their own trumpets, and, without any noise from thyself, will have their resound abroad, busy not thy best member in the encomium of thyself. Praise is a debt we owe unto the virtues of others, and due unto our own from all, whom malice hath not made mutes, or envy struck dumb. Fall not, however, into the common prevaricating way of self-commendation and boasting, by denoting the imperfections of others. He who discommendeth others obliquely, commendeth himself. He who whispers their infirmities, proclaims his own exemption from them; and consequently says, I am not as this publican, or hic

[61] An animal called more commonly the Sloth, which is said to be several days in climbing a tree.

[62] The Olympic games, of which the race was one of the chief.

[63] Timidly.

niger,[64] whom I talk of. Open ostentation and loud vain-glory is more tolerable than this obloquity, as but containing some froth, no ink; as but consisting of a personal piece of folly, nor complicated with uncharitableness. Superfluously we seek a precarious applause abroad; every good man hath his plaudite[65] within himself; and though his tongue be silent, is not without loud cymbals in his breast. Conscience will become his panegyrist, and never forget to crown and extol him unto himself.

§ 35.—Bless not thyself only that thou wert born in Athens;[66] but, among thy multiplied acknowledgments, lift up one hand unto heaven, that thou wert born of honest parents; that modesty, humility, patience, and veracity, lay in the same egg, and came into the world with thee. From such foundations thou mayest be happy in a virtuous precocity,[67] and make an early and long walk in goodness; so mayest thou more naturally feel the contrariety of vice unto nature, and resist some by the antidote of thy temper. As "charity covers," so modesty preventeth "a multitude of sins;" withholding from noon-day vices, and brazen-browed iniquities from sinning on the house-top, and painting our follies with the rays of the sun. Where this virtue reigneth, though vice may show its head, it cannot be in its glory. Where shame of sin sets, look not for virtue to arise; for when modesty taketh wing, Astræa[68] goes soon after.

§ 36.—The heroical vein of mankind runs much in the soldiery and courageous part of the world, and in that form we oftenest find men above men. History is full of the gallantry of that tribe; and when we read

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[64] Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto.—Hor.
This man is vile; here, Roman, fix your mark;
His soul is black, as his complexion 's dark.—Francis.

[65] Plaudite was the term by which the ancient theatrical performers solicited a clap.

[66] As Socrates did. Athens a place of learning and civility.

[67] A ripeness preceding the usual time.

[68] Astræa, goddess of justice, and consequently of all virtue.

their notable acts, we easily find what a difference there is between a life in Plutarch[69] and in Laertius.[70] Where true fortitude dwells, loyalty, bounty, friendship and fidelity may be found. A man may confide in persons constituted for noble ends, who dare, do, and suffer, and who have a hand to burn for their country and their friend.[71] Small and creeping things are the product of petty souls. He is like to be mistaken, who makes choice of a covetous man for a friend, or relieth upon the reed of narrow and poltroon friendship. Pitiful things are only to be found in the cottages of such breasts; but bright thoughts, clear deeds, constancy, fidelity, bounty, and generous honesty are the gems of noble minds; wherein, to derogate from none, the true heroic English gentleman hath no peer.

PART II.

§ 1.—Punish not thyself with pleasure; glut not thy sense with palative delights, nor revenge the contempt of temperance by the penalty of satiety. Were there an age of delight or any pleasure durable, who would not honour Volupia? But the race of delight is short, and pleasures have mutable faces. The pleasures of one age are not pleasures in another, and their lives fall short of our own. Even in our sensual days, the strength of delight is in its seldomness or rarity,[72] and sting in its satiety; mediocrity is its life, and immoderacy its confusion. The luxurious emperors of old inconsiderately satiated themselves with the dainties of sea and land, till, wearied through all varieties, their refections became a study unto them, and they were fain to

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[69] Who wrote the lives, for the most part, of warriors.
[70] Who wrote the lives of philosophers.
[71] Like Mutius Scævola.
[72] Voluptates commendat rarior usus.

feed by invention: novices in true epicurism! which by mediocrity, paucity, quick and healthful appetite, makes delights smartly acceptable; whereby Epicurus himself found Jupiter's brain[73] in a piece of Cytheridian cheese, and the tongues of nightingales in a dish of onions.[74] Hereby healthful and temperate poverty hath the start of nauseating luxury; unto whose clear and naked appetite every meal is a feast, and in one single dish the first course of Metellus;[75] who are cheaply hungry, and never lose their hunger or advantage of a craving appetite, because obvious food contents it; while Nero,[76] half famished, could not feed upon a piece of bread, and, lingering after his snowed water, hardly got down an ordinary cup of Calda.[78] By such circumscriptions of pleasure the contemned philosophers reserved unto themselves the secret of delight, which the Helluos[79] of those days lost in their exorbitances. In vain we study delight: it is at the command of every sober mind, and in every sense born with us: but nature, who teacheth us the rule of pleasure, instructeth also in the bounds thereof, and where its line expireth. And therefore, temperate minds, not pressing their pleasures until the sting appeareth, enjoy their contentations contentedly and without regret; and so escape the folly of excess, to be pleased unto displacency.

§ 2. — Bring candid eyes unto the perusal of men's works, and let not Zoilism[80] or detraction blast well-intended labours. He that endureth no faults in men's writings must only read his own, wherein for the most part all appeareth white. Quotation mistakes,

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[73] Cerebrum Jovis, for a delicious bit.

[74] A dish used among the luxurious of antiquity.

[75] Metellus, his riotous pontificial supper, the great variety whereat is to be seen in Macrobius. The supper was not given by Metellus, but by Lentulus when he was made priest of Mars, and recorded by Metellus.

[76] Nero in his flight. Sueton.

[78] Warm water. Caldæ gelidæque minister.

[79] Gluttons.

[80] *From Zoilus* the calumniator of Homer.

inadvertency, expedition, and human lapses, may make, not only moles but warts in learned authors; who, notwithstanding being judged by the capital matter, admit not of disparagement. I should unwillingly affirm that Cicero was but slightly versed in Homer, because in his work "De Gloria" he ascribed those verses unto Ajax, which were delivered by Hector. What if Plautus in the account of Hercules mistaketh nativity for conception? Who would have mean thoughts of Apollinaris Sidonius, who seems to mistake the river Tigris for Euphrates; and though a good historian and learned bishop of Auvergne, had the misfortune to be out in the story of David, making mention of him when the ark was sent back by the Philistines upon a cart, which was before his time? Though I have no great opinion of Machiavel's learning, yet I shall not presently say that he was but a novice in Roman history, because he was mistaken in placing Commodus after the emperor Severus. Capital truths are to be narrowly eyed; collateral lapses and circumstantial deliveries not to be too strictly sifted. And if the substantial subject be well forged out, we need not examine the sparks which irregularly fly from it.

§ 3. — Let well-weighed considerations, not stiff and peremptory assumptions, guide thy discourses, pen, and actions. To begin or continue our works like Trismegistus of old, "verum certè verum atque verissimum est,"[81] would sound arrogantly unto present ears in this strict inquiring age; wherein, for the most part, probably, and perhaps, will hardly serve to mollify the spirit of captious contradictors. If Cardan saith that a parrot is a beautiful bird, Scaliger will set his wits to work to prove it a deformed animal. The compage of all physical truths is not so closely jointed, but opposition may find intrusion; nor always so closely maintained, as not to suffer attrition. Many positions seem

[81] In Tabula Smaragdina. "It is true, certainly true, true in the highest degree."

quodlibetically[82] constituted, and like a Delphian blade[83] will cut on both sides. Some truths seem almost falsehoods, and some falsehoods almost truths; wherein falsehood and truth seem almost equilibriously stated, and but a few grains of distinction to bear down the balance. Some have digged deep, yet glanced by the royal vein;[84] and a man may come unto the pericardium,[85] but not the heart of truth. Besides, many things are known, as some are seen, that is, by parallaxis[86], or at some distance from their true and proper beings, the superficial regard of things having a different aspect from their true and central natures. And this moves sober pens unto suspensory and timorous assertions, nor presently to obtrude them as Sibyls' leaves;[87] which after considerations may find to be but folious appearances, and not the central and vital interiors of truth.

§ 4.—Value the judicious, and let not mere acquests in minor parts of learning gain thy pre-existimation. It is an unjust way of computation, to magnify a weak head for some Latin abilities; and to undervalue a solid judgment, because he knows not the genealogy of Hector. When that notable king of France[88] would have his son to know but one sentence in Latin, had it been a good one, perhaps it had been enough. Natural parts and good judgments rule the world. States are not governed by ergotisms.[89] Many have ruled well, who could not, perhaps, define a Commonwealth; and they who understand not the globe of the earth, command a great part of it. Where natural

[82] Determinable on either side.

[83] The Delphian sword became proverbial, not because it cut on both sides, but because it was used to different purposes.

[84] I suppose the main vein of a mine.

[85] The integument of the heart.

[86] The parallax of a star is the difference between its real and apparent place.

[87] On which the Sybil wrote her oraculous answers. VIRGIL.

[88] Lewis the eleventh. Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare.

[89] Conclusions deduced according to the forms of logic.

logic prevails not, artificial too often faileth. Where nature fills the sails, the vessel goes smoothly on; and when judgment is the pilot, the insurance need not be high. When industry builds upon nature, we may expect pyramids: where that foundation is wanting, the structure must be low. They do most by books, who could do much without them; and he that chiefly owes himself unto himself, is the substantial man.

§ 5.—Let thy studies be free as thy thoughts and contemplations: but fly not only upon the wings of imagination; join sense unto reason, and experiment unto speculation, and so give life unto embryo truths and verities yet in their chaos. There is nothing more acceptable unto the ingenious world, than this noble eluctation[90] of truth; wherein, against the tenacity of prejudice and prescription, this century now prevaileth. What libraries of new volumes aftertimes will behold, and in what a new world of knowledge the eyes of our posterity may be happy, a few ages may joyfully declare; and is but a cold thought unto those, who cannot hope to behold this exaltation of truth, or that obscured virgin half out of the pit: which might make some content with a commutation of the time of their lives, and to commend the fancy of the Pythagorean metempsychosis:[91] whereby they might hope to enjoy this happiness in their third or fourth selves, and behold that in Pythagoras, which they now but foresee in Euphorbus.[92] The world, which took but six days to make, is like to take six thousand to make out: meanwhile old truths voted down begin to resume their places, and new ones arise upon us; wherein there is no comfort in the happiness of Tully's Elysium,[93] or any satisfaction from the ghosts of the ancients, who

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[90] Forcible eruption.

[91] Transmigration of the soul from body to body.

[92] Ipse ego, nam memini, Trojani tempore belli
Panthoides Euphorbus eram.——— Ovid.

[93] Who comforted himself that he should there converse with the old philosophers.

knew so little of what is now well known. Men disparage not antiquity, who prudently exalt new inquiries; and make not them the judges of truth, who were but fellow inquirers of it. Who can but magnify the endeavours of Aristotle, and the noble start which learning had under him; or less than pity the slender progression made upon such advantages; while many centuries were lost in repetitions and transcriptions sealing up the book of knowledge? And therefore rather than to swell the leaves of learning by fruitless repetitions, to sing the same song in all ages, nor adventure at essays beyond the attempt of others, many would be content that some would write like Helmont or Paracelsus;[94] and be willing to endure the monstrosity of some opinions, for divers singular notions requiting such aberrations.

§ 6.—Despise not the obliquities of younger ways, nor despair of better things whereof there is yet no prospect. Who would imagine that Diogenes, who in his younger days was a falsifier of money, should, in the after-course of his life be so great a contemner of metal? Some negroes, who believe the resurrection, think that they shall rise white.[95] Even in this life regeneration may imitate resurrection; our black and vicious tinctures may wear off, and goodness clothe us with candour. Good admonitions knock not always in vain. There will be signal examples of God's mercy, and the angels must not want their charitable rejoices for the conversion of lost sinners. Figures of most angles do nearest approach unto circles, which have no angles at all. Some may be near unto goodness, who are conceived far from it; and many things happen, not likely to ensue from any promises of antecedencies. Culpable beginnings have found commendable conclusions, and infamous courses pious retractations. Detestable sinners have proved exemplary converts on

[94] Wild and enthusiastic authors of romantic chemistry,
[95] Mandelslo's Travels.

earth, and may be glorious in the apartment of Mary Magdalen in heaven. Men are not the same through all divisions of their ages: time, experience, self-reflections, and God's mercies, make in some well-tempered minds a kind of translation before death, and men to differ from themselves as well as from other persons. Hereof the old world afforded many examples to the infamy of latter ages, wherein men too often live by the rule of their inclinations; so that, without any astral prediction, the first day gives the last:[96] men are commonly as they were; or rather, as bad dispositions run into worse habits, the evening doth not crown, but sourly conclude the day.

§ 7.—If the Almighty will not spare us according to his merciful capitulation at Sodom; if his goodness please not to pass over a great deal of bad for a small pittance of good, or to look upon us in the lump; there is slender hope for mercy, or sound presumption of fulfilling half his will, either in persons or nations: they who excel in some virtues being so often defective in others; few men driving at the extent and amplitude of goodness, but computing themselves by their best parts, and others by their worst, are content to rest in those virtues which others commonly want. Which makes this speckled face of honesty in the world; and which was the imperfection of the old philosophers and great pretenders unto virtue, who well declining the gaping vices of intemperance, incontinency, violence and oppression, were yet blindly peccant in iniquities of closer faces, were envious, malicious, contemners, scoffers, censurers, and stuffed with vizard vices, no less depraving the ethereal principle and diviner portion of man. For envy, malice, hatred, are the qualities of Satan, close and dark like himself; and where such brands smoke the soul cannot be white. Vice may be had at all prices; expensive and costly inquities which make the noise, cannot be every man's

[96] Primusque dies dedit extremum.

sins; but the soul may be foully inquinated[97] at a very low rate, and a man may be cheaply vicious to the perdition of himself.

§ 8.—Opinion rides upon the neck of reason; and men are happy, wise, or learned, according as that empress shall set them down in the register of reputation. However, weigh not thyself in the scales of thy own opinion, but let the judgment of the judicious be the standard of thy merit. Self-estimation is a flatterer too readily entitling us unto knowledge and abilities, which others solicitously labour after, and doubtfully think they attain. Surely, such confident tempers do pass their days in best tranquillity, who, resting in the opinion of their own abilities, are happily gulled by such contentation; wherein pride, self-conceit, confidence, and opiniatrity, will hardly suffer any to complain of imperfection. To think themselves in the right, or all that right, or only that, which they do or think, is a fallacy of high content; though others laugh in their sleeves, and look upon them as in a deluded state of judgment: wherein, notwithstanding, it were but a civil piece of complacency to suffer them to sleep who would not wake, to let them rest in their securities, nor by dissent or opposition to stagger their contentments.

§ 9.[98]—Since the brow speaks often true, since eyes and noses have tongues, and the countenance proclaims the heart and inclinations, let observation so far instruct thee in physiognomical lines, as to be some rule for thy distinction, and guide for thy affection unto such as look most like men. Mankind, methinks, is comprehended in a few faces, if we exclude all visages which any way participate of symmetries and schemes of look common unto other animals. For as though man were the extract of the world, in whom all were "in coagulato,"[99] which in their forms were "in soluto"[100]

[97] Defiled.

[98] This is a very fanciful and indefensible section.

[99] "In a congealed or compressed mass."

[100] In a state of expansion and separation."

and at extension; we often observe that men do most act those creatures, whose constitution, parts, and complexion do most predominate in their mixtures. This is a corner-stone in physiognomy, and holds some truth not only in particular persons, but also in whole nations. There are, therefore, provincial faces, national lips and noses, which testify not only the natures of those countries, but of those which have them elsewhere. Thus we may make England the whole earth, dividing it not only into Europe, Asia, Africa, but the particular regions thereof; and may in some latitude affirm, that there are Egyptians, Scythians, Indians among us, who though born in England, yet carry the faces and air of those countries, and are also agreeable and correspondent unto their natures. Faces look uniformly unto our eyes: how they appear unto some animals of a more piercing or different sight, who are able to discover the inequalities, rubs and hairiness of the skin, is not without good doubt; and, therefore, in reference unto man, Cupid is said to be blind. Affection should not be too sharp-eyed, and love is not to be made by magnifying glasses. If things were seen as they truly are, the beauty of bodies would be much abridged. And, therefore, the wise contriver hath drawn the pictures and outsides of things softly and amiably unto the natural edge of our eyes, not leaving them able to discover those uncomely asperities, which make oyster-shells in good faces, and hedgehogs even in Venus's moles.

§ 10.—Court not felicity too far, and weary not the favourable hand of fortune. Glorious actions have their times, extent, and non ultras. To put no end unto attempts were to make prescription of successes, and to bespeak unhappiness at the last; for the line of our lives is drawn with white and black vicissitudes, wherein the extremes hold seldom one complexion. That Pompey should obtain the surname of Great at twenty-five years, that men in their young and active days should *be fortunate* and perform notable things, is no

observation of deep wonder, they having the strength of their fates before them, nor yet acted their parts in the world for which they were brought into it; whereas men of years, matured for counsels and designs, seem to be beyond the vigour of their active fortunes, and high exploits of life, providentially ordained unto ages best agreeable unto them. And, therefore, many brave men finding their fortune grow faint, and feeling its declination, have timely withdrawn themselves from great attempts, and so escaped the ends of mighty men, disproportionable to their beginnings. But magnanimous thoughts have so dimmed the eyes of many, that forgetting the very essence of fortune, and the vicissitude of good and evil, they apprehend no bottom in felicity, and so have been still tempted on unto mighty actions, reserved for their destructions. For fortune lays the plot of our adversities in the foundation of our felicities, blessing us in the first quadrate,[101] to blast us more sharply in the last. And since in the highest felicities there lieth a capacity of the lowest miseries, she hath this advantage from our happiness to make us truly miserable; for to become acutely miserable we are to be first happy. Affliction smarts most in the most happy state, as having somewhat in it of Bellisarius at beggar's bush, or Bajazet in the grate.[102] And this the fallen angels severely understand, who having acted their first part in heaven, are made sharply miserable by transition, and more afflictively feel the contrary state of hell.

§ 11.—Carry no careless eye upon the unexpected scenes of things, but ponder the acts of Providence

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[101] That is, "in the first part of our time," alluding to the four quadratures of the moon.

[102] Bellisarius, after he had gained many victories, is said to have been reduced, by the displeasure of the emperor, to actual beggary; Bajazet, made captive by Tamerlane, is reported to have been shut up in a cage. It may somewhat gratify those who deserve to be gratified, to inform them that both these stories are false.

in the public ends of great and notable men, set out unto the view of all for no common memorandums. The tragical exits and unexpected periods of some eminent persons cannot but amuse considerate observators; wherein, notwithstanding, most men seem to see by extramission,[103] without reception or self-reflexion, and conceive themselves unconcerned by the fallacy of their own exemption; whereas, the mercy of God hath singled out but few to be the signals of his justice, leaving the generality of mankind to the pædagogy of example. But the inadvertency of our natures not well apprehending this favourable method and merciful decimation,[104] and that he showeth in some what others also deserve; they entertain no sense of his hand beyond the stroke of themselves. Whereupon the whole becomes necessarily punished, and the contracted hand of God extended unto universal judgments; from whence, nevertheless, the stupidity of our tempers receives but faint impressions, and in the most tragical state of times holds but starts of good motions. So that to continue us in goodness there must be iterated returns of misery, and a circulation in afflictions is necessary. And since we cannot be wise by warnings; since plagues are insignificant, except we be personally plagued; since also we cannot be punished unto amendment by proxy or commutation, nor by vicinity but contaction; there is an unhappy necessity that we must smart in our own skins, and the provoked arm of the Almighty must fall upon ourselves. The capital sufferings of others are rather our monitions than acquitments. There is but one who died salvifically[105] for us, and able to say unto death, "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther;" only one enlivening death, which makes gardens of graves, and that which was sowed in cor-

[103] By the passage of sight from the eye to the object.

[104] The selection of every tenth man for punishment, a practice sometimes used in general mutinies.

[105] "So as to procure salvation."

ruption to arise and flourish in glory: when death itself shall die, and living shall have no period; when the damned shall mourn at the funeral of death; when life, not death, shall be the wages of sin: when the second death shall prove a miserable life, and destruction shall be courted.

§ 12. — Although their thoughts may seem too severe, who think that few ill-natured men go to heaven; yet it may be acknowledged that good-natured persons are best founded for that place, who enter the world with good dispositions and natural graces, more ready to be advanced by impressions from above, and Christianized unto pieties, who carry about them plain and down-right dealing minds, humility, mercy, charity, and virtues acceptable unto God and man. But whatever success they may have as to heaven, they are the acceptable men on earth, and happy is he who hath his quiver full of them for his friends. These are not the dens wherein falsehood lurks, and hypocrisy hides its head, wherein frowardness makes its nest, or where malice, hard-heartedness, and oppression love to dwell; not those by whom the poor get little, and the rich some time lose all; men, not of retracted looks, but who carry their hearts in their faces, and need not to be looked upon with perspectives, nor sordidly or mischievously ungrateful; who cannot learn to ride upon the neck of the afflicted, nor load the heavy laden, but who keep the temple of Janus[106] shut by peaceable and quiet tempers; who make not only the best friends, but the best enemies, as easier to forgive than offend, and ready to pass by the second offence before they avenge the first; who make natural royalists, obedient subjects, kind and merciful princes, verified in our own, one of the best-natured kings of this throne. Of the old Roman emperors the best were the best natured, though they made but a small number,

[106] The temple of Janus among the Romans was shut in time of peace, and opened at a declaration of war.

and might be writ in a ring. Many of the rest were as bad men as princes; humourists, rather than of good humours; and of good natural parts, rather than of good natures, which did but arm their bad inclinations, and make them wittily wicked.

§ 13.—With what shift and pains we come into the world, we remember not, but it is commonly found no easy matter to get out of it. Many have studied to exasperate the ways of death, but fewer hours have been spent to soften that necessity. That the smoothest way unto the grave is made by bleeding, as common opinion presumeth; beside the sick and fainting languors which accompany that effusion, the experiment in Lucan and Seneca[107] will make us doubt: under which the noble Stoic so deeply laboured, that, to conceal his affliction, he was fain to retire from the sight of his wife, and not ashamed to implore the merciful hand of his physician to shorten his misery therein. Ovid,[108] the old heroes, and the Stoics, who were so afraid of drowning, as dreading thereby the extinction of their soul, which they conceived to be a fire, stood probably in fear of an easier way of death; wherein the water, entering the possessions of air, makes a temperate suffocation, and kills, as it were, without a fever. Surely many who have had the spirit to destroy themselves, have not been ingenious in the contrivance thereof. It was a dull way practised by Themistocles, to overwhelm himself with bull's blood,[109] who, being an Athenian, might have held an easier theory of death from the state portion of his country; from which Socrates, in Plato, seemed not to suffer much more than from the fit of an ague. Cato is much to be pitied, who mangled himself with poniards; and Hannibal seems more subtle, who carried his

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[107] Seneca, having opened his veins, found the blood flow so slowly, and death linger so long, that he was forced to quicken it by going into a warm bath.

[108] Demito naufragium, mors mihi munus erit.

[109] Plutarch's lives.

delivery, not in the point, but the pummel[110] of his sword.

The Egyptians were merciful contrivers, who destroyed their malefactors by asps, charming their senses into an invincible sleep, and killing as it were with Hermes's rod.[111] The Turkish emperor,[112] odious for other cruelty, was herein a remarkable master of mercy, killing his favourite in his sleep, and sending him from the shade into the house of darkness. He who had been thus destroyed, would hardly have bled at the presence of his destroyer: when men are already dead by metaphor, and pass but from one sleep unto another, wanting herein the eminent part of severity to feel themselves to die; and escaping the sharpest attendant of death, the lively apprehension thereof. But to learn to die is better than to study the ways of dying. Death will find some ways to untie or cut the most Gordian knots of life, and make men's miseries as mortal as themselves; whereas evil spirits, as undying substances, are inseparable from their calamities; and, therefore, they everlastingly struggle under their angustias,[113] and, bound up with immortality, can never get out of themselves.

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[110] Pummel, wherein he is said to have carried something, whereby upon a struggle or despair he might deliver himself from all misfortunes. Juvenal says it was carried in a ring:

> Cannarum vindex, et tanti sanguinis ultor,
> Annulus. ———
>
> Nor swords at hand, nor hissing darts afar,
> Are doomed to avenge the tedious bloody war,
> But poison drawn through a ring's hollow plate.
>
> DRYDEN.

[111] Which procured sleep by a touch.

[112] Solyman. Turkish history.

[113] Agonies.

PART III.

§ 1.—It is hard to find a whole age to imitate, or what century to propose for example. Some have been far more approveable than others; but virtue, and vice, panegyrics, and satires, scatteringly to be found in all. History sets down not only things laudable, but abominable; things which should never have been, or never have been known; so that noble patterns must be fetched here and there from single persons, rather than whole nations; and from whole nations rather than any one. The world was early bad, and the first sin the most deplorable of any. The younger world afforded the oldest men, and perhaps the best and the worst, when length of days made virtuous habits heroical and immoveable, vicious, inveterate and irreclaimable. And since it is said that the imaginations of their hearts were evil, only evil, and continually evil; it may be feared that their sins held pace with their lives, and their longevity swelling their impieties, the longanimity of God would no longer endure such vivacious abominations. Their impieties were surely of a deep dye, which required the whole element of water to wash them away, and overwhelmed their memories with themselves; and so shut up the first windows of time, leaving no histories of those longevous generations, when men might have been properly historians, when Adam might have read long lectures unto Methuselah, and Methuselah unto Noah. For had we been happy in just historical accounts of that unparalleled world, we might have been acquainted with wonders, and have understood not a little of the acts and undertakings of Moses, his mighty men, and men of renown of old, which might have enlarged our thoughts, and made the world older unto us. For the unknown part of time shortens the estimation, if not the compute of it. What hath escaped our knowledge, falls not under our consideration; and what is and will be latent, is little better than non-existent.

§ 2.—Some things are dictated for our instruction, some acted for our imitation; wherein it is best to ascend unto the highest conformity, and to the honour of the exemplar. He honours God, who imitates him; for what we virtuously imitate we approve and admire; and since we delight not to imitate inferiors, we aggrandize and magnify those we imitate; since also we are most apt to imitate those we love, we testify our affection in our imitation of the inimitable. To affect to be like, may be no imitation; to act, and not to be what we pretend to imitate, is but a mimical conformation, and carrieth no virtue in it. Lucifer imitated not God, when he said he would be like the Highest; and he[114] imitated not Jupiter, who counterfeited thunder. Where imitation can go no farther, let admiration step on, whereof there is no end in the wisest form of men. Even angels and spirits have enough to admire in their sublimer natures; admiration being the act of the creature, and not of God, who doth not admire himself. Created natures allow of swelling hyperboles; nothing can be said hyperbolically of God, nor will his attributes admit of expressions above their own exuberances.[115] Trismegistus's circle, whose centre is every where, and circumference no where, was no hyperbole. Words cannot exceed, where they cannot express enough. Even the most winged thoughts fall at the setting out, and reach not the portal of Divinity.

§ 3.—In bivious theorems,[116] and Janus-faced doctrines, let virtuous considerations state the determination. Look upon opinions as thou dost upon the moon, and choose not the dark hemisphere for thy contemplation. Embrace not the opacous and blind side of opinions, but that which looks most luciferously or influentially unto goodness. It is better to think that there are guardian spirits, than that there are no spirits to guard us; that vicious persons are slaves, than that

[114] Salmoneus.
[115] Exaggerations.
[116] Speculations which open different tracks to the mind.

there is any servitude in virtue; that times past have been better than times present, than that times were always bad; and that to be men it sufficeth to be no better than men in all ages, and so promiscuously to swim down the turbid stream, and make up the grand confusion. Sow not thy understanding with opinions, which make nothing of iniquities, and fallaciously extenuate transgressions. Look upon vices and vicious objects, with hyperbolical eyes; and rather enlarge their dimensions, that their unseen deformities may not escape thy sense, and their poisonous parts and stings may appear massy and monstrous unto thee: for the undiscerned particles and atoms of evil deceive us, and we are undone by the invisibles of seeming goodness. We are only deceived in what is not discerned, and to err is but to be blind or dim-sighted as to some perceptions.

§ 4.—To be honest in a right line,[117] and virtuous by epitome, be firm unto such principles of goodness as carry in them volumes of instruction and may abridge thy labour. And since instructions are many, hold close unto those, whereon the rest depend; so may we have all in a few, and the law and the prophets in a rule; the Sacred Writ in stenography,[118] and the Scripture in a nut-shell. To pursue the osseous and solid part of goodness, which gives stability and rectitude to all the rest; to settle on fundamental virtues, and bid early defiance unto mother-vices, which carry in their bowels the seminals of other iniquities, makes a short cut in goodness, and strikes not off a head, but the whole neck of Hydra. For we are carried into the dark lake, like the Egyptian river into the sea, by seven principal ostiaries: the mother-sins[119] of that number are the deadly engines of evil spirits that undo us, and even evil spirits themselves; and he who is under the chains thereof is not without a possession. Mary Magdalene

[117] Linea recta brevissima. [118] In short hand.
[119] Pride, covetousness, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, sloth.

had more than seven devils, if these with their imps were in her; and he who is thus possessed, may literally be named "Legion." Where such plants grow and prosper, look for no champaign or region void of thorns; but productions like the tree of Goa,[120] and forests of abomination.

§ 5.—Guide not the hand of God, nor order the finger of the Almighty unto thy will and pleasure; but sit quiet in the soft showers of Providence, and favourable distributions in this world, either to thyself or others. And since not only judgments have their errands, but mercies their commissions; snatch not at every favour, nor think thyself passed by if they fall upon thy neighbour. Rake not up envious displacences at things successful unto others, which the Wise Disposer of all thinks not fit for thyself. Reconcile the events of things unto both beings, that is, of this world and the next; so will there not seem so many riddles in Providence, nor various inequalities in the dispensation of things below. If thou dost not "anoint thy face," yet put not on "sackcloth" at the felicities of others. Repining at the good, draws on rejoicing at the evils of others, and so falls into that inhuman vice,[121] for which so few languages have a name. The blessed spirits above rejoice at our happiness below; but to be glad at the evils of one another, is beyond the malignity of hell, and falls not on evil spirits, who, though they rejoice at our unhappiness, take no pleasure at the afflictions of their own society or of their fellow natures. Degenerous heads! who must be fain to learn from such examples, and to be taught from the school of hell.

§ 6.—Grain[122] not thy vicious stains, nor deepen those swart tinctures, which temper, infirmity, or ill habits have set upon thee; and fix not, by iterated depravations, what time might efface, or virtuous washes

[120] Arbor Goa de Ruyz, or Ficus Indica, whose branches send down shoots which root in the ground, from whence there successively rise others, till one tree becomes a wood.

[121] *Ἐπικαιρεκακία.*

[122] See note 15, page 9.

expunge. He who thus still advanceth in iniquity, deepeneth his deformed hue, turns a shadow into night, and makes himself a negro in the black jaundice; and so becomes one of those lost ones, the disproportionate pores of whose brains afford no entrance unto good motions, but reflect and frustrate all counsels, deaf unto the thunder of the laws, and rocks unto the cries of charitable commiserators. He who hath had the patience of Diogenes, to make orations unto statues, may more sensibly apprehend how all words fall to the ground, spent upon such a surd and earless generation of men, stupid unto all instruction, and rather requiring an exorcist than an orator for their conversion!

§ 7. — Burden not the back of Aries, Leo, or Taurus[123] with thy faults; nor make Saturn, Mars, or Venus guilty of thy follies. Think not to fasten thy imperfections on the stars, and so despairingly conceive thyself under a fatality of being evil. Calculate thyself within; seek not thyself in the moon, but in thine own orb or microscomical circumference.[124] Let celestial aspects admonish and advertise, not conclude and determine thy ways. For since good and bad stars moralize not our actions, and neither excuse or commend, acquit or condemn our good or bad deeds at the present or last bar; since some are astrologically well disposed, who are morally highly vicious; not celestial figures, but virtuous schemes, must denominate and state our actions. If we rightly understood the names whereby God calleth the stars; if we knew his name for the Dog-star, or by what appellation Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn obey his will; it might be a welcome accession unto astrology, which speaks great things, and is fain to make use of appellations from Greek and Barbaric systems. Whatever influences, impulsions, or inclinations there be from the lights above, it were a piece of wisdom to make one of those wise men who

[123] The ram, lion, or bull, signs in the zodiac.
[124] "In the compass of thy own little world."

overrule their stars,[125] and with their own militia contend with the host of heaven. Unto which attempt there want not auxiliaries from the whole strength of morality, supplies from Christian ethics, influences also and illuminations from above, more powerful than the lights of heaven.

§ 8. — Confound not the distinctions of thy life which nature hath divided; that is, youth, adolescence, manhood, and old age: nor in these divided periods, wherein thou art in a manner four, conceive thyself but one. Let every division be happy in its proper virtues, nor one vice run through all. Let each distinction have its salutary transition, and critically deliver thee from the imperfections of the former; so ordering the whole, that prudence and virtue may have the largest section. Do as a child when thou art a child, and ride not on a reed at twenty. He who hath not taken leave of the follies of his youth, and in his maturer state scarce got out of that division, disproportionately divideth his days, crowds up the latter part of his life, and leaves too narrow a corner for the age of wisdom; and so hath room to be a man, scarce longer than he hath been a youth. Rather than to make this confusion, anticipate the virtues of age, and live long without the infirmities of it. So mayest thou count up thy days as some do Adam's,[126] that is by anticipation; so mayest thou be coetaneous unto thy elders, and a father unto thy contemporaries.

§ 9. — While others are curious in the choice of good air, and chiefly solicitous for healthful habitations, study thou conversation, and be critical in thy consortion. The aspects, conjunctions, and configurations of the stars, which mutually diversify, intend, or qualify their influences, are but the varieties of their nearer or farther conversation with one another, and

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[125] Sapiens dominabitur astris.

[126] Adam, thought to be created in the state of man, about thirty years old.

like the consortion of men, whereby they become better or worse, and even exchange their natures. Since men live by examples, and will be imitating something; order thy imitation to thy improvement, not thy ruin. Look not for roses in Attalus's garden,[127] or wholesome flowers in a venomous plantation. And since there is scarce any one bad, but some others are the worse for him; tempt not contagion by proximity, and hazard not thyself in the shadow of corruption. He who hath not early suffered this shipwreck, and in his younger days escaped this Charybdis, may make a happy voyage, and not come in with black sails into the port.[128] Self-conversation, or to be alone, is better than such consortion. Some schoolmen tell us, that he is properly alone, with whom in the same place there is no other of the same species. Nebuchadnezzar was alone, though among the beasts of the field; and a wise man may be tolerably said to be alone, though with a rabble of people little better than beasts about him. Unthinking heads, who have not learned to be alone, are in a prison to themselves, if they be not also with others: whereas, on the contrary, they whose thoughts are in a fair, and hurry within, are sometimes fain to retire into company, to be out of the crowd of themselves. He who must needs have company, must needs have sometimes bad company. Be able to be alone. Lose not the advantage of solitude, and the society of thyself; nor be only content, but delight to be alone and single with Omnipresency. He who is thus prepared, the day is not uneasy nor the night black unto him. Darkness may bound his eyes, not his imagination. In his bed he may lie, like Pompey and his sons,[129] in all quarters of the earth; may speculate the universe, and

[127] Attalus made a garden which contained only venomous plants.

[128] Alluding to the story of Theseus, who had black sails when he went to engage the Minotaur in Crete.

[129] Pompeios Juvenes Asia atque Europa, sed ipsum terra tegit Libyes.

enjoy the whole world in the hermitage of himself Thus the old ascetic Christians found a paradise in a desert, and with little converse on earth held a conversation in heaven; thus they astronomised in caves and though they beheld not the stars had the glory of heaven before them.

§ 10. — Let the characters of good things stand indelibly in thy mind, and thy thoughts be active on them. Trust not too much unto suggestions from reminiscential amulets,[130] or artificial memorandums. Let the mortifying Janus of Covarrubias[131] be in thy daily thoughts, not only on thy hand and signets. Rely not alone upon silent and dumb remembrances. Behold not death's heads till thou dost not see them, nor look upon mortifying objects till thou overlookest them. Forget not how assuefaction unto any thing minorates the passion from it; how constant objects lose their hints, and steal inadvertently upon us. There is no excuse to forget what every thing prompts unto us. To thoughtful observators, the whole world is a phylactery;[132] and every thing we see an item of the wisdom, power, or goodness of God. Happy are they who verify their amulets, and make their phylacteries speak in their lives and actions. To run on in despite of the revulsions and pull-backs of such remoras, aggravates our transgressions. When death's heads on our hands have no influence upon our heads, and fleshless cadavers abate not the exorbitances of the flesh; when crucifixes upon men's hearts suppress not their bad

[130] Any thing worn on the hand or body, by way of monition or remembrance,

[131] Don Sebastian de Covarrubias wrote three centuries of moral emblems, in Spanish. In the 88th of the second century, he sets down two faces averse, and conjoined, Janus-like; the one a gallant beautiful face, the other a death's-head face, with this motto out of Ovid's Metamorphosis,

Quid fuerim, quid simque, vide.

——————— You discern
What now I am, and what I was shall learn.—ADDISON.

[132] See page 14. Note 30.

commotions, and his image who was murdered for us withholds not from blood and murder: phylacteries prove but formalities, and their despised hints sharpen our condemnations.

§ 11.—Look not for whales in the Euxine sea, or expect great matters where they are not to be found. Seek not for profundity in shallowness, or fertility in a wilderness. Place not the expectation of great happiness here below, or think to find heaven on earth; wherein we must be content with embryo felicities, and fruitions of doubtful faces: for the circle of our felicities makes but short arches. In every clime we are in a Periscian[133] state; and, with our light, our shadow and darkness walk about us. Our contentments stand upon the tops of pyramids, ready to fall off, and the insecurity of their enjoyments abrupteth our tranquillities. What we magnify is magnificent, but, like to the Colossus, noble without, stuffed with rubbish and coarse metal within. Even the sun, whose glorious outside we behold, may have dark and smoky entrails. In vain we admire the lustre of any thing seen: that which is truly glorious, is invisible. Paradise was but a part of the earth, lost not only to our fruition but our knowledge. And if, according to old dictates, no man can be said to be happy before death; the happiness of this life goes for nothing before it be over, and while we think ourselves happy we do but usurp that name. Certainly, true beatitude groweth not on earth, nor hath this world in it the expectations we have of it. He swims in oil,[134] and can hardly avoid sinking, who hath such light foundations to support him: it is therefore, happy, that we have two worlds to hold on. To enjoy true happiness, we must travel into a very far country, and even out of ourselves; for the pearl we

[133] "With shadows all round us." The Periscii are those, who, living within the polar circle, see the sun move round them, and consequently, project their shadows in all directions.

[134] Which being a light fluid, cannot support any heavy body.

seek for is not to be found in the Indian, but in the empyrean ocean.[135]

§ 12.—Answer not the spur of fury, and be not prodigal or prodigious in revenge. Make not one in the Historia horribilis;[136] slay not thy servant for a broken glass,[137] nor pound him in a mortar who offendeth thee;[138] supererogate not in the worst sense, and overdo not the necessities of evil; humour not the injustice of revenge. Be not stoically mistaken in the equality of sins, nor commutatively unjust in the valuation of transgressions; but weigh them in the scales of heaven, and by the weights of righteous reason. Think that revenge too high which is but level with the offence. Let thy arrows of revenge fly short; or be aimed like those of Jonathan, to fall beside the mark. Too many there be to whom a dead enemy smells well, and who find musk and amber in revenge. The ferity of such minds holds no rule in retaliations, requiring too often a head for a tooth, and the supreme revenge for trespasses which a night's rest should obliterate. But patient meekness takes injuries like pills, not chewing, but swallowing them down, laconically suffering, and silently passing them over; while angered pride makes a noise, like Homerican Mars[139] at every scratch of offences.

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[135] "In the expanses of the highest heavens."

[136] A book so entitled, wherein are sundry horrid accounts.

[137] When Augustus supped with one of the Roman senators, a slave happened to break a glass, for which his master ordered him to be thrown into his pond to feed his lampreys. Augustus, to punish his cruelty, ordered all the glasses in the house to be broken.

[138] Anaxarchus, an ancient philosopher, was beaten in a mortar, by a tyrant.

[139] Tu miser exclamas, ut Stentora vincere possis,
Vel potius quantum Gradivus Homericus. JUV.

You rage and storm, and blasphemously loud,
As Stentor bellowing to the Grecian crowd,
Or Homer's Mars. ——— CREECH.

ɜ women[140] do most delight in revenge, it may seem
eminine manhood to be vindictive. If thou must
ɜ have thy revenge of thine enemy, with a soft
ue[141] break his bones, heap coals of fire on his head,
ve him and enjoy it. To forgive our enemies is a
ning way of revenge, and a short Cæsarean con-
t overcoming without a blow; laying our enemies
ur feet under sorrow, shame, and repentance;
ng our foes our friends, and solicitously inclined to
ful retaliations. Thus to return upon our adver-
ɜ is a healing way of revenge; and to do good for
a soft and melting ultion,—a method taught from
en to keep all smooth on earth. Common forceable
ɜ make not an end of evil, but leave hatred and
ɔe behind them. An enemy thus reconciled is little
ɐ trusted, as wanting the foundation of love and
ty, and but for a time restrained by disadvantage
ability. If thou hast not mercy for others, yet be
cruel unto thyself. To ruminate upon evils, to
ɜ critical notes upon injuries, and be too acute in
apprehensions, is to add unto our own tortures, to
er the arrows of our enemies, to lash ourselves
the scorpions of our foes, and to resolve to sleep no
; for injuries long dreamt on, take away at last all
and he sleeps but like Regulus who busieth his
about them.

13. — Amuse not thyself about the riddles of
e things. Study prophecies when they are become
ries, and past hovering in their causes. Eye well
s past and present, and let conjectural sagacity

——— Minuti
ıper et infirmi est animi exiguique voluptas,
io ——— Sic collige, quod vindictâ
no magis gaudet, quam fœmina. Juv.

——— Revenge! which still we find
ɜ weakest frailty of a feeble mind.
generous passion, and for man too base,
ıeats its empire in the female race. Creech.

"A soft tongue breaketh the bones." Prov. xxv. 15.

suffice for things to come. There is a sober latitude fc prescience in contingencies of discoverable temper whereby discerning heads see sometimes beyond the eyes, and wise men become prophetical. Leave cloud predictions to their periods, and let appointed seasor have the lot of their accomplishments. It is too earl to study such prophecies before they have been lon made, before some train of their causes have alread taken fire, laying open in part what lay obscure an before buried unto us. For the voice of prophecies i like that of whispering-places; they who are near, or s a little distance, hear nothing; those at the farthes extremity will understand all. But a retrograde cogni tion of times past, and things which have already bee is more satisfactory than a suspended knowledge (what is yet unexistent. And the greatest part of tim being already wrapt up in things behind us, it is no somewhat late to bait after things before us; for futurit still shortens, and time present sucks in time to come What is prophetical in one age, proves historical i another, and so must hold on unto the last of time when there will be no room for prediction, when Janu shall lose one face, and the long beard of time shall loo like those of David's servants, shorn away upon on side; and when, if the expected Elias should appea he might say much of what is past, not much of what i to come.

§ 14.—Live unto the dignity of thy nature, and leav it not disputable at last, whether thou hast been a ma or, since thou art a composition of man and beast, ho thou hast predominantly passed thy days, to state th denomination. Unman not, therefore, thyself by bestial transformation, nor realize old fables. Expo not thyself by four-footed manners unto monstrou draughts, and caricature representations. Think n after the old Pythagorean conceit, what beast thc mayest be after death. Be not under any brutal metem sychosis[142] while thou livest, and walkest about erect

[142] See page 29, note 91.

under the scheme of man. In thine own circumference, as in that of the earth, let the rational horizon be larger than the sensible, and the circle of reason than of sense: let the divine part be upward, and the region of beast below; otherwise, it is but to live invertedly, and with thy head unto the heels of thy antipodes. Desert not thy title to a divine particle and union with invisibles. Let true knowledge and virtue tell the lower world thou art a part of the higher. Let thy thoughts be of things which have not entered into the hearts of beasts; think of things long past, and long to come: acquaint thyself with the choragium[143] of the stars, and consider the vast expansion beyond them. Let intellectual tubes give thee a glance of things, which visive organs reach not. Have a glimpse of incomprehensibles, and thoughts of things which thoughts but tenderly touch. Lodge immaterials in thy head; ascend unto invisibles; fill thy spirit with spirituals, with the mysteries of faith, the magnalities of religion, and thy life with the honour of God; without which, though giants in wealth and dignity, we are but dwarfs and pigmies in humanity, and may hold a pitiful rank in that triple division of mankind into heroes, men, and beasts. For though human souls are said to be equal, yet is there no small inequality in their operations; some maintain the allowable station of men; many are far below it; and some have been so divine as to approach the apogeum[144] of their natures, and to be in the confinium of spirits.

§ 15.—Behold thyself by inward optics and the crystalline[145] of thy soul. Strange it is, that in the most perfect sense there should be so many fallacies, that we are fain to make a doctrine, and often to see by art. But the greatest imperfection is in our inward sight, that is, to be ghosts unto our own eyes; and while we are so sharp-sighted as to look through others, to be

[143] Dance.
[144] To the utmost point of distance from earth and earthly things.
[145] Alluding to the crystalline humour of the eye.

invisible unto ourselves; for the inward eyes are more fallacious than the outward. The vices we scoff at in others, laugh at us within ourselves. Avarice, pride, falsehood, lie undiscerned and blindly in us, even to the age of blindness; and, therefore, to see ourselves interiorly, we are fain to borrow other men's eyes; wherein true friends are good informers, and censurers no bad friends. Conscience only, that can see without light, sits in the Areopagy[146] and dark tribunal of our hearts, surveying our thoughts and condemning their obliquities. Happy is that state of vision that can see without light, though all should look as before the creation, when there was not an eye to see, or light to actuate a vision: wherein, notwithstanding, obscurity is only imaginable respectively unto eyes; for unto God there was none; eternal light was ever; created light was for the creation, not himself; and as he saw before the sun, may still also see without it. In the city of the new Jerusalem there is neither sun nor moon; where glorified eyes must see by the Archetypal sun,[147] or the light of God, able to illuminate intellectual eyes, and make unknown visions. Intuitive perceptions in spiritual beings may, perhaps, hold some analogy unto vision; but yet how they see us, or one another, what eye, what light, or what perception is required unto their intuition, is yet dark unto our apprehension: and even how they see God, or how unto our glorified eyes the beatifical vision will be celebrated, another world must tell us, when perceptions will be new, and we may hope to behold invisibles.

§ 16.—When all looks fair about, and thou seest not a cloud so big as a hand to threaten thee, forget not the wheel of things: think of sullen vicissitudes, but beat not thy brains to foreknow them. Be armed against such obscurities, rather by submission than foreknowledge. The knowledge of future evils morti-

[146] The great court, like the Areopagus of Athens.
[147] Original.

fies present felicities, and there is more content in the uncertainty or ignorance of them. This favour our Saviour vouchsafed unto Peter, when he foretold not his death in plain terms, and so by an ambiguous and cloudy delivery damped not the spirit of his disciples. But in the assured foreknowledge of the deluge, Noah lived many years under the affliction of a flood; and Jerusalem was taken unto Jeremiah, before it was besieged. And, therefore, the wisdom of astrologers, who speak of future things, hath wisely softened the severity of their doctrines; and even in their sad predictions, while they tell us of inclination not coaction from the stars, they kill us not with Stygian oaths and merciless necessity, but leave us hopes of evasion.

§ 17.—If thou hast the brow to endure the name of traitor, perjured, or oppressor, yet cover thy face when ingratitude is thrown at thee. If that degenerous vice possess thee, hide thyself in the shadow of thy shame, and pollute not noble society. Grateful ingenuities are content to be obliged within some compass of retribution; and being depressed by the weight of iterated favours, may so labour under their inabilities of requital, as to abate the content from kindnesses. But narrow, self-ended souls make prescription of good offices, and obliged by often favours, think others still due unto them: whereas, if they but once fail, they prove so perversely ungrateful, as to make nothing of former courtesies, and to bury all that is past. Such tempers pervert the generous course of things; for they discourage the inclinations of noble minds, and make beneficency cool unto acts of obligation, whereby the grateful world should subsist, and have their consolation. Common gratitude must be kept alive by the additional fuel of new courtesies: but generous gratitudes, though but once well obliged, without quickening repetitions or expectation of new favours, have thankful minds for ever; for they write not their obligations in sandy, but marble memories, which wear not out but with themselves.

§ 18.—Think not silence the wisdom of fools; but, if rightly timed, the honour of wise men, who have not the infirmity, but the virtue of taciturnity; and speak not out of the abundance, but the well-weighed thoughts of their hearts. Such silence may be eloquence, and speak thy worth above the power of words. Make such a one thy friend, in whom princes may be happy, and great counsels successful. Let him have the key of thy heart, who hath the lock of his own, which no temptation can open; where thy secrets may lastingly lie, like the lamp in Olybius's urn,[148] alive, and light, but close and invisible.

§ 19.—Let thy oaths be sacred, and promises be made upon the altar of thy heart. Call not Jove to witness, with a stone[149] in one hand, and a straw in another; and so make chaff and stubble of thy vows. Worldly spirits, whose interest is their belief, make cobwebs of obligations; and, if they can find ways to elude the urn[150] of the prætor, will trust the thunderbolt of Jupiter; and, therefore, if they should as deeply swear as Osman to Bethlem Gabor,[151] yet whether they would be bound by those chains, and not find ways to cut such Gordian knots, we could have no just assurance. But honest men's words are Stygian oaths, and promises inviolable. These are not the men for whom the fetters of law were first forged; they needed not the solemnness of oaths; by keeping their faith they swear, and evacuate such confirmations.[152]

§ 20.—Though the world be histrionical, and most men live ironically, yet be thou what thou singly art, and personate only thyself. Swim smoothly in the stream of thy nature, and live but one man. To

[148] Which after many hundred years was found burning under ground, and went out as soon as the air came to it.

[149] Jovem lapidem jurare.

[150] The vessel into which the ticket of condemnation or acquittal was cast.

[151] See the oath of Sultan Osman in his life, in the addition to Knoll's Turkish History.

[152] Colendo *fidem jurant*.—CURTIUS.

single hearts doubling is excruciating: such tempers must sweat to dissemble, and prove but hypocritical hypocrites. Simulation must be short: men do not easily continue a counterfeiting life, or dissemble unto death. He who counterfeiteth, acts a part; and is, as it were, out of himself: which, if long, proves so irksome, that men are glad to pull off their vizards, and resume themselves again; no practice being able to naturalize such unnaturals, or make a man rest content not to be himself. And, therefore, since sincerity is thy temper, let veracity be thy virtue, in words, manners, and actions. To offer at iniquities, which have so little foundations in thee, were to be vicious up-hill, and strain for thy condemnation. Persons viciously inclined, want no wheels to make them actively vicious; as having the elater and spring of their own natures to facilitate their iniquities. And, therefore, so many, who are sinistrous unto good actions, are ambidexterous unto bad; and Vulcans in virtuous paths, Achilleses in vicious motions.

§ 21.—Rest not in the high-strained paradoxes of old philosophy, supported by naked reason, and the reward of mortal felicity; but labour in the ethics of faith, built upon heavenly assistance, and the happiness of both beings. Understand the rules, but swear not unto the doctrines of Zeno or Epicurus.[153] Look beyond Antoninus, and terminate not thy morals in Seneca or Epictetus.[154] Let not the twelve, but the two tables be thy law: let Pythagoras be thy remembrancer, not thy textuary and final instructor; and learn the vanity of the world rather from Solomon than Phocylydes.[155] Sleep not in the dogmas of the Peripatus, Academy, or Porticus.[156] Be a moralist of the

[153] The authors of the Stoical and Epicurean philosophy.
[154] Stoical philosphers.
[155] A writer of moral sentences in verse.
[156] Three schools of philosophy.

mount,[157] an Epictetus in the faith, and Christianise thy notions.

§ 22.—In seventy or eighty years a man may have a deep gust of the world, know what it is, what it can afford, and what it is to have been a man. Such a latitude of years may hold a considerable corner in the general map of time; and a man may have a curt epitome of the whole course thereof in the days of his own life; may clearly see he hath but acted over his forefathers; what it was to live in ages past, and what living will be in all ages to come.

He is like to be the best judge of time who hath lived to see about the sixtieth part thereof. Persons of short times may know what it is to live, but not the life of man, who, having little behind them, are but Janus's of one face, and know not singularities enough to raise axioms of this world: but such a compass of years will show new examples of old things, parallelisms of occurrences through the whole course of time, and nothing be monstrous unto him; who may in that time understand not only the varieties of men, but the variation of himself, and how many men he hath been in that extent of time.

He may have a close apprehension what it is to be forgotten, while he hath lived to find none who could remember his father, or scarce the friends of his youth; and may sensibly see with what a face in no long time oblivion will look upon himself. His progeny may never be his posterity; he may go out of the world less related than he came into it; and, considering the frequent mortality in friends and relations, in such a term of time, he may pass away divers years in sorrow and black habits, and leave none to mourn for himself; orbity may be his inheritance, and riches his repentance.

In such a thread of time, and long observation of men,

[157] That is, according to the rules laid down in our Saviour's sermon on the mount.

he may acquire a physiognomical intuitive knowledge; judge the interiors by the outside, and raise conjectures at first sight; and knowing what men have been, what they are, what children probably will be, may in the present age behold a good part and the temper of the next; and since so many live by the rules of constitution, and so few overcome their temperamental inclinations, make no improbable predictions.

Such a portion of time will afford a large prospect backward, and authentic reflections how far he hath performed the great intention of his being, in the honour of his Maker; whether he hath made good the principles of his nature, and what he was made to be; what characteristic and special mark he hath left, to be observable in his generation; whether he hath lived to purpose or in vain; and what he hath added, acted, or performed, that might considerably speak him a man.

In such an age, delights will be undelightful, and pleasures grow stale unto him; antiquated theorems will revive, and Solomon's maxims[158] be demonstrations unto him: hopes or presumptions be over, and despair grow up of any satisfaction below. And having been long tossed in the ocean of this world, he will by that time feel the in-draught of another, unto which this seems but preparatory, and without it of no high value. He will experimentally find the emptiness of all things, and the nothing of what is past; and wisely grounding upon true Christian expectations, finding so much past, will wholly fix upon what is to come. He will long for perpetuity, and live as though he made haste to be happy. The last may prove the prime part of his life, and those his best days which he lived nearest heaven.

§ 23.—Live happy in the Elysium of a virtuously composed mind, and let intellectual contents exceed the delights wherein mere pleasurists place their paradise. Bear not too slack reins upon pleasure, nor let complexion or contagion betray thee unto the exorbitancy of

[158] That "all is vanity."

delight. Make pleasure thy recreation or intermissive relaxation, not thy Diana, life, and profession. Voluptuousness is as insatiable as covetousness. Tranquillity is better than jollity, and to appease pain than to invent pleasure. Our hard entrance into the world, our miserable going out of it, our sicknesses, disturbances, and sad rencounters in it, do clamorously tell us we come not into the world to run a race of delight, but to perform the sober acts and serious purposes of man; which to omit were foully to miscarry in the advantage of humanity, to play away an uniterable life, and to have lived in vain. Forget not the capital end, and frustrate not the opportunity of once living. Dream not of any kind of metempsychosis[149] or transanimation, but into thine own body, and that after a long time; and then also unto wail or bliss, according to thy first and fundamental life. Upon a curricle in this world depends a long course of the next, and upon a narrow scene here an endless expansion hereafter. In vain some think to have an end of their beings with their lives. Things cannot get out of their natures, or be or not be in despite of their constitutions. Rational existences in heaven perish not at all, and but partially on earth: that which is thus once, will in some way be always: the first living human soul is still alive, and all Adam hath found no period.

§ 24. — Since the stars of heaven do differ in glory; since it hath pleased the Almighty hand to honour the north-pole with lights above the south: since there are some stars so bright that they can hardly be looked upon, some so dim that they can scarcely be seen, and vast numbers not to be seen at all even by artificial eyes; read thou the earth in heaven, and things below from above. Look contentedly upon the scattered difference of things, and expect not equality in lustre, dignity, or perfection, in regions or persons below; where numerous numbers must be content to stand like lacteous or nebulous stars, little taken notice of, or dim

[149] See note 91, page 29.

in their generations. All which may be contentedly allowable in the affairs and ends of this world, and in suspension unto what will be in the order of things hereafter, and the new system of mankind which will be in the world to come; when the last may be the first, and the first the last; when Lazarus may sit above Cæsar, and the just obscure on earth shall shine like the sun in heaven; when personations shall cease, and histrionism of happiness be over; when reality shall rule, and all shall be as they shall be for ever.

§ 25. — When the Stoic said that life would not be accepted if it were offered unto such as knew it,[160] he spoke too meanly of that state of being which places us in the form of men. It more depreciates the value of this life, that men would not live it over again; for although they would still live on, yet few or none can endure to think of being twice the same men upon earth, and some had rather never have lived, than to tread over their days once more. Cicero[161] in a prosperous state had not the patience to think of beginning in a cradle again. Job would not only curse the day of his nativity, but also of his renascency, if he were to act over his disasters and the miseries of the dunghill. But the greatest underweening of this life is to undervalue that, unto which this is but exordial, or a passage leading unto it. The great advantage of this mean life is thereby to stand in a capacity of a better; for the colonies of heaven must be drawn from earth, and the sons of the first Adam are only heirs unto the second. Thus Adam came into this world with the power also of another; not only to replenish the earth, but the everlasting mansions of heaven. Where we were "when the foundations of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy,"[162] He must answer who asked it; who understands

[160] Vitam nemo acciperet, si daretur scientibus.—Seneca.

[161] Si quis Deus mihi largiatur, ut repuerascam et in cunis vagiam, valde recusem.—Cic. de Senectute.

[162] Job xxxviii.

entities of preordination, and beings yet unbeing; who hath in his intellect the ideal existences of things, and entities before their extances. Though it looks but like an imaginary kind of existency, to be before we are; yet since we are under the decree or prescience of a sure and omnipotent power, it may be somewhat more than a nonentity to be in that mind, unto which all things are present.

§ 26.—If the end of the world shall have the same foregoing signs, as the period of empires, states, and dominions in it, that is, corruption of manners, inhuman degenerations, and deluge of iniquities; it may be doubted, whether that final time be so far off, of whose day and hour there can be no prescience. But while all men doubt, and none can determine how long the world shall last, some may wonder that it hath spun out so long and unto our days. For if the Almighty had not determined a fixed duration unto it, according to his mighty and merciful designments in it; if he had not said unto it, as he did unto a part of it, "hither shalt thou go and no further;" if we consider the incessant and cutting provocations from the earth; it is not without amazement, how his patience hath permitted so long a continuance unto it; how he, who cursed the earth in the first days of the first man, and drowned it in the tenth generation after, should thus lastingly contend with flesh, and yet defer the last flames. For since he is sharply provoked every moment, yet punisheth to pardon, and forgives to forgive again; what patience could be content to act over such vicissitudes, or accept of repentances which must have after-penitences, his goodness can only tell us. And surely if the patience of Heaven were not proportionable unto the provocations from earth, there needed an intercessor not only for the sins, but the duration of this world, and to lead it up unto the present computation. Without such a merciful longanimity, the heavens would never be so aged as to grow old like a garment. It were in vain to infer from the doctrine of the sphere,

that the time might come, when Capella, a noble northern star, would have its motion in the equator; that the northern zodiacal signs would at length be the southern, the southern the northern, and Capricorn become our Cancer. However, therefore, the wisdom of the Creator hath ordered the duration of the world, yet since the end thereof brings the accomplishment of our happiness, since some would be content that it should have no end, since evil men and spirits do fear it may be too short, since good men hope it may not be too long; "the prayer of the saints under the altar" will be the supplication of the righteous world, that his mercy would abridge their languishing expectation, and hasten the accomplishment of their happy state to come.

§ 27.—Though good men are often taken away from the evil to come; though some in evil days have been glad that they were old, nor long to behold the iniquities of a wicked world, or judgments threatened by them; yet is it no small satisfaction unto honest minds, to leave the world in virtuous well-tempered times, under a prospect of good to come, and continuation of worthy ways acceptable unto God and man. Men who die in deplorable days, which they regretfully behold, have not their eyes closed with the like content; while they cannot avoid the thoughts of proceeding or growing enormities, displeasing unto that Spirit unto whom they are then going, whose honour they desire in all times and throughout all generations. If Lucifer could be freed from his dismal place, he would little care though the rest were left behind. Too many there may be of Nero's mind, who, if their own turn were served, would not regard what became of others; and, when they die themselves, care not if all perish.[163] But good men's wishes extend beyond their lives, for

[163] Nero often had this saying in his mouth, Ἐμοῦ θάνοντος γαῖα μιχθήτω πύρι: "When I am once dead, let the earth and fire be jumbled together."

the happiness of times to come, and never to be known unto them. And, therefore, while so many question prayers for the dead, they charitably pray for those who are not yet alive; they are not so enviously ambitious to go to heaven by themselves; they cannot but humbly wish, that the little flock might be greater, the narrow gate wider, and that, as many are called, so not a few might be chosen.

§ 28.—That a greater number of angels remained in heaven, than fell from it, the schoolmen will tell us; that the number of blessed souls will not come short of that vast number of fallen spirits, we have the favourable calculation of others. What age or century hath sent most souls unto heaven, he can tell who vouchsafeth that honour unto them. Though the number of the blessed must be complete before the world can pass away; yet since the world itself seems in the wane, and we have no such comfortable prognostics of latter times; since a greater part of time is spun than is to come, and the blessed roll already much replenished; happy are those pieties, which solicitously look about, and hasten to make one of that already much filled and abbreviated list to come.

§ 29.—Think not thy time short in this world, since the world itself is not long. The created world is but a small parenthesis in eternity; and a short interposition for a time between such a state of duration, as was before it and may be after it. And if we should allow of the old tradition, that the world should last six thousand years, it could scarce have the name of old, since the first man lived near a sixth part thereof, and seven Methuselahs would exceed its whole duration. However, to palliate the shortness of our lives, and somewhat to compensate our brief term in this world, it is good to know as much as we can of it; and also, so far as possibly in us lieth, to hold such a theory of times past, as though we had seen the same. He who hath thus considered the world, as also how therein things long past have been answered by things present; how mat-

ters in one age have been acted over in another; and how there is nothing new under the sun; may conceive himself in some manner to have lived from the beginning, and to be as old as the world; and if he should still live on, it would be but the same thing.

§ 30.—Lastly; if length of days be thy portion, make it not thy expectation.[164] Reckon not upon long life: think every day the last, and live always beyond thy account. He that so often surviveth his expectation lives many lives, and will scarce complain of the shortness of his days. Time past is gone like a shadow; make time to come present. Approximate thy latter times by present apprehensions of them: be like a neighbour unto the grave, and think there is but little to come. And since there is something of us that will still live on, join both lives together, and live in one but for the other. He who thus ordereth the purposes of this life, will never be far from the next; and is in some manner already in it, by a happy conformity, and close apprehension of it. And if, as we have elsewhere declared,[165] any have been so happy, as personally to understand Christian annihilation, ecstasy, exolution, transformation, the kiss of the spouse, and ingression into the Divine shadow, according to mystical theology, they have already had a handsome anticipation of heaven, the world is in a manner over, and the earth in ashes unto them.

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[164] Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum,
Grata superveniet quæ non sperabitur hora.—Hor.
Believe, that ev'ry morning's ray
Hath lighted up thy latest day;
Then, if to-morrow's sun be thine,
With double lustre shall it shine.—Francis.

[165] In his treatise of "Urnburial." Some other parts of these essays are printed in a letter among Browne's posthumous works. Those references to his own books prove these essays to be genuine.

London:
Printed by STEWART and MURRAY, Old Bailey.

JUL 11 1951